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ABSTRACT

Evaluation is an important component of measuring educational effectiveness. The purpose of this survey is to analyze the attainment of "graduate standards," a school district's list of ten statements of adult roles, skills, and education all students need in order to be successful after high-school graduation. These standards encompass areas such as academic achievement, self-directed learning, complex thinking, communication skills, problem solving, interpersonal relationships, collaborative working, creative quality production, community contributions, and health consciousness. For the survey, two institutions of higher education rated eighty-four graduates of the school district. Students rated highest on strong interpersonal relating and lowest on collaborative work. The next highest rated category was community contributors, with the average of all standards falling in the middle range. The major purpose of this survey was to determine if there is agreement between higher educators' ratings and those of employers and the graduates themselves in terms of the graduate standards. The latter two measures are forthcoming. Five appendices list the graduate standards, the survey form, and survey results. (RJM)

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ED 405 543

EVALUATION REPORT

1996 HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF EVALUATION SERVICES

- PROVIDING ASSESSMENT, PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RESEARCH SERVICES -

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Saginaw, Michigan

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1996 HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY

An Approved Report of the

Department of Evaluation, Testing, and Research

Richard N. Claus, Ph.D.
Manager, Program Evaluation

Barry E. Quimper, Director
Evaluation, Testing, and Research

Dr. Foster B. Gibbs, Superintendent
School District of the City of Saginaw

July, 1996

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Introduction

The Higher Education Survey is an extension of the 1995 Graduate Follow-Up Study. This study, which appears under a separate cover, was undertaken for a number of reasons, but the most primary was to serve as one of the "success indicators" related to the District's Strategic Plan. Employer and higher education surveys related to the 1995 graduates were two other "success indicators". The primary question related to both was "How well did our graduates measure up to the District's ten 'graduate standards' through the eyes of our customers?"

The "graduate standards" (see Appendix A for the complete description) are represented in a set of statements of the adult roles, skills and education all students need in order to be successful after graduation from Saginaw Schools. The standards represent a consensus of the best knowledge and experience of our customers, both inside and outside the school system. They come from people who live, work, and prosper in the world around us. Saginaw Public Schools envision all students achieving the "graduate standards". They are concisely stated in the following conceptual categories: 1) academic achiever, 2) self-directed learner, 3) complex thinker, 4) effective communicator, 5) individual/group problem solver, 6) strong interpersonal relator, 7) collaborative worker, 8) creative quality producer, 9) community contributor, and 10) health conscious individual.

The Higher Education Survey attempted to measure each "graduate standard" by soliciting an evaluation of our students based on two or three key statements related to each (see Appendix B for a copy of the survey and the cover letter). Limitations include the fact that it is only approximately nine months past graduation, many institutions of higher education may not completely know their new students. In addition, a large percent of our graduates are continuing their education as well as being employed on a part- or full-time basis. Thus, the higher education bound graduates may be trying to support themselves as well as further their post-secondary education.

Procedures relating to how the survey was conducted follow on the next page.

Procedures

A new procedure was tried this year to have both of the district's high schools identify graduates who indicated they would attend either Delta Community Collage (Delta) or Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU). A cover letter (Appendix B) was written that allowed for a listing of students enrolled by each institution of higher education along with a rationale for the study and directions to the responding educators. The attempt was to have an instructor who knew each graduate rate them on a set of 25 behavioral statements (approximately three each for the ten "graduate standards") which were to be rated on a five-point scale from 5 = Very Well to 1 = Very Poor. These statements comprised the 25 items posed to the educators (see Appendix B for a copy of the survey).

On March 13, 1996 the Higher Education Survey was mailed to the two largest receiving institutions of higher education in Saginaw County. By July, 1996 both Delta and SVSU had rated 18 and 66 graduates respectively.

The findings of the Higher Education Survey follow on the next page but the complete set of tabulated results are presented in Appendix C.

Findings

The reader is again reminded that the complete results from the educators to each survey question are given in Appendix C.

Highlights

A total of 84 graduates from the two largest receiving institutions of higher education in Saginaw County responded to the survey. On average, respondents answered approximately 15 of 25 (60.0%) of the survey items related to the "graduate standards" for each enrolled graduate. The items not responded to were those the educator had no opportunity to observe the precise behavior called for by the item.

The ten "graduate standards" (see Appendix A for a complete description of each) that relate to the "success indicators" of the District's new Strategic Plan were measured in part by the Higher Education Survey. Recall that the survey asked educators to rate our graduates on 25 statements using a 5-point scale: 5 = Very Well, to 1 = Very Poor. The 25 statements were each matched to the associated "graduate standard" (see Appendix D for a key to this matching). The ratings for matching statements were averaged to determine an overall rating for each "graduate standard". The chart below displays the overall average rating of each "graduate standard" on a 5-point scale (1 through 5).

"Graduate Standard"	Average Rating of Institutions of Higher Education
Strong Interpersonal Relator	3.4
Community Contributor	3.3
Individual/Group Problem Solver	3.2
Complex Thinker	3.2
Effective Communicator	3.1
Self-Directed Learner	3.1
Academic Achiever	3.0
Health Conscious Individual	3.0
Creative Quality Producer	2.9
Collaborative Worker	2.7

As can be seen from a review of the chart above, all ten "graduate standards" were given a rating of 2.7 thru 3.4 points on a 5-point scale (where 5 = Very Good, 4 = Good, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Poor, and 1 = Very Poor). The district appears to have done the best according to higher educators when it came to producing Strong Interpersonal Relator which was given the highest rating of 3.4. The next highest rated category was Community Contributor followed by the Individual/Group Problem Solver, Complex Thinker, Effective Communicator, Self-Directed Learner, Academic Achiever, Health Conscious Individual, Creative Quality Producer, and Collaborative Worker (with ratings of 3.3, 3.2, 3.2, 3.1, 3.1, 3.0, 3.0, 2.9, and 2.7 respectively). Thus, from the standpoint of those responding from higher education, it is clear that, on average, our district's outcomes in terms of the "graduate standards" are rated in the middle range. The graduate and employer surveys (which are currently underway) will seek to determine if there is agreement on these ratings or whether there are large discrepancies. These reports are planned for publication later this summer/fall.

Summary

The most significant results of the Higher Education Survey which took a look at Saginaw's Class of 1995 (ten months after graduation) through the eyes of their post-secondary educators from the two largest receiving institutions of higher education in Saginaw County have been presented. Ratings of the graduates relative to the "graduate standards" were sought on a 5-point scale (5 = Very Well to 1 = Very Poor). Averaged ratings ranged from a high of 3.4 to Strong Interpersonal Relator to a low of 2.7 Collaborative Worker (the entire set of ratings can be found in the findings section of this report).

The two institutions of higher education targeted in Saginaw County responded to the survey and in so doing rated 84 Saginaw graduates they received as freshmen. This study was a pilot of an attempt to identify graduates attending institutions of higher education prior to the completion of the graduate follow-up. A graduate follow-up card with an added reverse side requests this information concerning post-secondary training programs/colleges/universities (see Appendix E for a copy) has been defined and was used to collect information from 1996 graduates. A full scale attempt to contact all institutions of higher education prior to the 1996 graduate follow-up may be attempted in the Spring of 1997.

The major purpose of the Higher Education Survey was to determine if there is agreement between higher educators ratings and those of employers and the graduates themselves in terms of the "graduate standards". The graduate and employer surveys are currently underway and the reporting of these results are scheduled later this year.

APPENDICES

Graduate Standards

The Graduate Standards are a statement of the adult roles, skills and education all students need in order to be successful in the world after graduation from Saginaw Schools. It represents a consensus of the best knowledge and expertise of our customers, both inside and outside the school system. It comes from people who live, work, and prosper in the world around us. We envision all students achieving the Standards; our Mission is to ensure that vision becomes reality.

A **ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS**, who:

- Demonstrate achievement of academic core curriculum content standards in science, mathematics, language arts,and social studies.
- Demonstrate proficiency on MEAP and high school proficiency assessments in science, mathematics, language arts, and social studies.
- Read, write, speak and listen effectively and appropriately in a variety of settings, and for a variety of audiences.
- Understand and use basic mathematics skills to reason and communicate mathematically to solve real world problems.
- Make connections between and among subject areas.
- Learn and use scientific knowledge and ways of thinking, through the study of the life and physical sciences and technological systems.
- Demonstrate effective, responsible citizenship through the study of history, geography, economics, civics and humanities.
- Examine and make career choices and plan educational programs to meet these goals.

B **SELF-DIRECTED LEARNERS**, who:

- Seek and use information with or without direction.
- Use tools, technology, and resources appropriately.
- Conceptualize, theorize, and apply knowledge.
- Synthesize, evaluate, and select plans of action.
- Display responsibility, self-motivation, self-esteem, curiosity, persistence, and are goal-oriented.
- Seek and set standards, by which they evaluate their own work.

C **COMPLEX THINKERS**, who:

- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate available resources and information in a logical, flexible, and innovative manner to make decisions and solve problems in a variety of situations.
- Make connections between learning and real life.
- Express creativity.
- Understand many points of view.

D **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS**, who:

- Speak and write English with clarity and purpose, through various styles and forms of communication.
- Know and understand non-verbal communication.
- Share, elicit, and actively listen to ideas, logic, and different points of views.
- Interpret and communicate data from text, graphs, charts, and other sources.

E **INDIVIDUAL/GROUP PROBLEM SOLVERS**, who:

- Evaluate situations and problems appropriately.
- Hypothesize, associate, and predict.
- Use problem-solving skills.
- Construct and verbalize solutions.
- Identify, organize, plan, and allocate resources.
- Choose ethical courses of action.
- Understand group dynamics and leadership skills, apply negotiation skills, and facilitate consensus.
- Apply technology to solve problems.
- Listen to, share, and accept different opinions.

F **STRONG INTERPERSONAL RELATERS**, who:

- Respect the feelings and ideas of others.
- Achieve consensus and exhibit a willingness to compromise.
- Perform with reliability and tenacity.
- Accept responsibility and understand consequences of actions.
- Understand when to lead and when to follow.
- Constructively manage conflict within themselves and between and among others.

G **COLLABORATIVE WORKERS**, who:

- Demonstrate group skills, integrate interpersonal relationships and are effective in multiple roles to accomplish goals within a multicultural diverse setting.
- Practice basic communication skills to encourage and motivate members to work to their potential.
- Recognize and use techniques to achieve consensus and compromise in making appropriate decisions.
- Interact in a positive manner and maintain a sense of humor in sharing praise and criticism.
- Demonstrate flexibility and innovation.
- Express and manage critical thinking skills in sharing and considering ideas.

CREATIVE QUALITY PRODUCERS, who:

- Are able to work individually and collaboratively in culturally diverse groups, creating intellectual, artistic, and practical products.
- Foster, develop, and sustain supportive, productive relationships.
- Support their own and others' originality, high standards, and the application of problem-appropriate technologies, resources, and information.
- Anticipate, assess, and work toward resolution of challenges and problems faced in a rapidly changing global society.
- Seek and set standards by which they evaluate their own work.

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS, who:

- Contribute their knowledge, time, and talents to making their neighborhood and community a better place to live.
- Participate in community projects.
- Relate to others and possess respect and tolerance for cultural, racial, and political differences.
- Possess a willingness and ability to work with others.
- Express self-assurance and good communication skills

HEALTH CONSCIOUS INDIVIDUALS, who:

- Practice and exhibit a healthy lifestyle.
- Understand and value proper nutrition.
- Recognize and practice physical fitness activities.
- Display the ability to handle stress in responsible ways.

550 Millard Street
Saginaw, Michigan 48607
(517) 759-2200
FAX: (517) 759-2315

Foster B. Gibbs, Ph.D., Superintendent

APPENDIX B

March 13, 1996

Mr. Willie Thompson
Vice President of Student Services
Delta College
University Center, MI 48710

Dear Mr. Thompson:

The School District of the City of Saginaw is currently gearing up to conduct a survey of colleges and universities relative to the performance of our 1995 graduates on dimensions related to our ten "graduate standards". Last year when we contacted your institution (your institution receives a large percentage of our graduates) it turned out to be too late for the surveys to be directed to the appropriate instructors.

Hopefully this year, we are early enough so that the instructors for second semester can rate these students using the enclosed survey (please feel free to make as many copies as you might need). We have provided a listing of our 1995 graduates since we hope you can have as many as possible rated.

Also we want to assure you and the instructors involved, that the data for the students will be aggregated and no individual student data will be reported or released.

We suggest that the surveys be distributed to faculty shortly after Spring Break and that the completed surveys be returned to us on or before **April 5, 1996.** If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact either of us by telephone: Barry at (517) 759-2302 or Richard at (517) 759-2307.

Sincerely,

Barry E. Quimper

Barry E. Quimper, Director
Evaluation, Testing and Research Dept.

Richard N. Claus

Richard N. Claus, Ph.D., Manager
Program Evaluation

Enclosures

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APPENDIX B

School District of the City of Saginaw, Michigan
Department of Evaluation Services
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ID No. | | | | |

1996 UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE/TRAINING PROGRAM SURVEY

Date: _____

Directions: Below are 25 statements describing student characteristics the Saginaw Public School District considers necessary for success after graduation (graduate standards). Please think of those opportunities you have had to observe our 1995 graduates in your University/College/Training Program and describe them using these statements on a five point scale. Circle **VW** for **Very Well**, **G** for **Good**, **U** for **Undecided**, **P** for **Poor**, and **VP** for **Very Poor**; circle **N/O** if you have had **No Opportunity** to observe the characteristics. Again, we do not intend to evaluate individual students; wherever possible, answer in collective or general terms.

1. Demonstrates achievement in science, mathematics language arts, and social studies.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
2. Reads, writes, speaks, and listens effectively in a variety of settings.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
3. Uses mathematics skills effectively to solve problems.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
4. Uses information effectively with or without directions.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
5. Evaluates and selects plans of action to arrive at a solution.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
6. Uses standards by which to evaluate work.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
7. Speaks and writes with clarity and purpose through various styles and forms of communication.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
8. Shares, elicits, and actively listens to ideas, logic, and different points of view.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
9. Interprets and communicates information contained in text, graphs, charts, and other sources.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
10. Allocates time and other resources to accomplish goal or task.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
11. Follows an ethical course of action.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
12. Applies leadership and other resources to accomplish goal or task.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O

APPENDIX B

1996 UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE/TRAINING PROGRAM SURVEY

13. Accepts responsibility and understands consequences of actions.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
14. Understands when to lead and when to follow.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
15. Constructively manages conflict within themselves and between and among others.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
16. Demonstrates group skills to accomplish goals.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
17. Practices basic communication skills to encourage and motivate colleagues to work to their potential.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
18. Demonstrates flexibility and innovation.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
19. Uses available technologies effectively (e.g., computers, telecommunication, etc.).	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
20. Works effectively toward to resolution of challenges and problems.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
21. Participates in voluntary community/corporate projects.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
22. Displays a tolerance and respect for cultural, racial, and political points of view.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
23. Possesses an ability to work with others.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
24. Exhibits a healthy lifestyle.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O
25. Displays the ability to handle stress in responsible ways.	VW	G	U	P	VP	N/O

Thank you for your participation.

School District of the City of Saginaw
Attention: Evaluation, Testing & Research Department
550 Millard St.
Saginaw, MI 48607

APPENDIX C

School District of the City of Saginaw, Michigan
Department of Evaluation Services
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1996 UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE/TRAINING PROGRAM SURVEY
(N=88 graduates rated from two institutions)

Date: _____

Directions: Below are 25 statements describing student characteristics the Saginaw Public School District considers necessary for success after graduation (graduate standards). Please think of those opportunities you have had to observe our 1995 graduates in your University/College/Training Program and describe them using these statements on a five point scale. Circle **VW** for **Very Well**, **G** for **Good**, **U** for **Undecided**, **P** for **Poor**, and **VP** for **Very Poor**; circle **N/O** if you have had **No Opportunity** to observe the characteristics. Again, we do not intend to evaluate individual students; wherever possible, answer in collective or general terms.

The following ratings use a 5-point scale where 5 = Very Well, 4 = Good, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Poor, and 1 = Very Poor.

Rating	
3.2	1. Demonstrates achievement in science, mathematics, language arts, and social studies. (N = 62)
3.1	2. Reads, writes, speaks, and listens effectively in a variety of settings. (N = 73)
2.7	3. Uses mathematics skills effectively to solve problems. (N = 28)
3.3	4. Uses information effectively with or without direction. (N = 69)
3.0	5. Evaluates and selects plans of action to arrive at a solution. (N = 62)
3.0	6. Uses standards by which to evaluate work. (N = 54)
3.2	7. Speaks and writes with clarity and purpose through various styles and forms of communication. (N = 70)
3.2	8. Shares, elicits, and actively listens to ideas, logic, and different points of view. (N = 66)
3.1	9. Interprets and communicates information contained in text, graphs, charts, and other sources. (N = 61)
3.1	10. Allocates time and other resources to accomplish goal or task. (N = 60)

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Rating	
3.5	11. Follows an ethical course of action. (N = 51)
3.0	12. Applies leadership and negotiation skills to facilitate consensus. (N = 45)
3.7	13. Accepts responsibility and understands consequences of actions. (N = 68)
3.2	14. Understands when to lead and when to follow. (N = 41)
3.1	15. Constructively manages conflict within themselves and between and among others. (N = 33)
2.5	16. Demonstrates group skills to accomplish goals. (N = 57)
2.9	17. Practices basic communication skills to encourage and motivate colleagues to work to their potential. (N = 44)
2.8	18. Demonstrates flexibility and innovation. (N = 59)
2.8	19. Uses available technologies effectively (e.g., computers, telecommunications, etc.). (N = 30)
3.1	20. Works effectively toward the resolution of challenges and problems. (N = 54)
3.0	21. Participates in voluntary community/corporate projects. (N = 18)
3.4	22. Displays a tolerance and respect for cultural, racial, and political points of view. (N = 18)
3.4	23. Possesses an ability to work with others. (N = 45)
3.1	24. Exhibits a healthy lifestyle. (N = 32)
3.0	25. Displays the ability to handle stress in responsible ways. (N = 43)

APPENDIX D

GRADUATE STANDARD TO STATEMENT NUMBER KEY

Graduate Standard	Statement Number Used To Measure Standard
Academic Achiever	1, 2, 3
Self-Directed Learner	4, 5, 6
Complex Thinker	8
Effective Communicator	7, 9
Individual/Group Problem Solver	10, 11, 12
Strong Interpersonal Relator	13, 14, 15
Collaborative Worker	16, 17, 18
Creative Quality Producer	19, 20
Community Contributor	21, 22, 23
Health Conscious Individual	24, 25

APPENDIX E

(FRONT)

GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION CARD

Dear Graduate:

We need the following information to contact you as part of our survey of the progress made by graduates toward their life goals.

Your Name: _____ _____ _____
First Middle Last

Your Address:
Primary: _____
Street

_____
City State Zip Code

Secondary: _____
Street

_____
City State Zip Code

Phone numbers where you can be reached or at which information about you can be provided.

Primary: _____ - _____ - _____
Area Code

Secondary: _____ - _____ - _____
Area Code

Secondary: _____ - _____ - _____
Area Code

(Please also fill-out the reverse side of this card)

PF1191

(BACK)

If you plan to attend a training program, junior college, college, or university, please indicate the name and address below:

Name: _____
Training program/college/university

Address: _____

_____
City, State